

Washington, DC – Today, Congressman Earl Blumenauer (OR-03) issued the following statement in response to the Republican 2012 budget resolution:

“For years, Republican budgets have featured under-investing in America’s future, while shifting more cost and uncertainty onto average Americans, in order to benefit people who are already well off. The Republican 2012 budget marks the high point of this 30 year battle by eliminating critical middle-class protections while giving more help to those who don’t need it.

“The Republican budget would keep draconian reductions to key government services and environmental and safety protections. It starves our ability to deliver basic services like immigration and border security, hurts veterans and ignores our fraying infrastructure. Medical inefficiencies and unfairness are locked in for 60 million Americans for 50 years while subjecting everyone under 55 to healthcare cuts that make a mockery of Republican campaign charges during the last elections. And in the areas of military spending and sky rocketing tax expenditures, Republicans merely nibble around the edges. If Ron Paul and Barney Frank can find \$100 billion in military savings, then a government-wide budget can do better. The House of Representatives has shown this with a bipartisan vote to eliminate the F-35 alternate engine. There is a bipartisan appetite to reduce military spending.

“A responsible budget would not give up on health security for Americans, but instead accelerate the reforms in our healthcare law. These provisions, after all – like Accountable Care Organizations, bundling of services, and preventing unnecessary hospital readmissions – used to be bipartisan sources of taxpayer savings. Abandoning health reforms for Medicare vouchers and Medicaid block grants will give us the worst of both, with less care at a higher cost for the children, families and seniors who depend on these programs. Also buried in the language of this budget is a trigger that will cause painful, across-the-board cuts in Social Security benefits once Chairman Ryan’s irresponsible and arbitrary cap on government spending is inevitably reached.

“A responsible budget would also admit that we do have a revenue problem, since tax collections are at their lowest rate in 60 years. At a time when you would expect to pay more to deal with the Baby Boom generation for 30 years and rebuild American infrastructure that is literally falling apart, Republicans are committed to making expiring tax cuts permanent and, shockingly, bigger still. Democrats, meanwhile, are seeking to make responsible investments in America. An example is the Senate version of the FAA reauthorization passed by an 8 to 1 margin that would adopt fee increases supported by the industry to provide billions for vital

airport construction and modernization.

“True tax reform should pay for what Americans need, in simpler and more equitable fashion. The administration, the Senate Finance Committee, and the House Ways and Means Committee are starting down this path. The Republican Budget would undercut this effort, locking in unfairness and inefficiency. The budget battles we face this year will show whether Congress is serious about a sustainable, equitable path forward and will demonstrate whether Americans can expect to get what they need from their federal partner. This budget is a poor start.”